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Turkey entangled in SALT

U.S. sure of right to monitor; Ankara seeks Soviet O.K.

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Ankara—Americans seem confident that the U-2's will be flying over Turkey to monitor Soviet missile tests under the new strategic arms limitation treaty, though it will be one year before the high-altitude spy planes are equipped for the job.

The Turkish government is delicately weighing the matter, insisting that it wants Soviet approval of the overflight so that, in the words of one diplomat, "the Soviets won't use it against us," while quietly letting it be known that Ankara would settle for a grudging tacit acquiescence from Moscow.

The U-2's—a generic name from the 1960's, the aircraft are known today as the TR-1—will fly 24 hours a day, in shifts from the British Akrotiri base on Cyprus to snoop on Russian missile tests in Tyuratam, 1,000 miles across the border.

The Turkish chief of staff, Gen. Kenan Evren, said last month that "under the present circumstances we cannot allow U-2 flights over Turkey. Even if they gave us \$150 million, we can make no concessions." But the Foreign Ministry and Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit subsequently softened that position.

U.S. efforts are now directed at the Soviet Union, insisting that the U-2's fall within the "national means" of verification mentioned in the SALT II treaty, as much as the two ground-based electronic monitoring stations in Iran that Washington had counted on before they were lost in that country's revolution.

Soviet officials have indicated they would not agree to border flights though no formal reaction has been received by Washington.

"I expect we would be saying to the Soviets 'Here is what we expect to use for verification to make the treaty work. If you don't like it, let us put a monitoring station inside the Soviet Union,'" an American official said.

"If they want to use the issue here, they can destroy the treaty."

The United States is now

similar Russian spy flights from Cuba along the coast, he added.

Always sensitive to the oscillations of its military ties with the United States, Turkey is particularly nervous about the term U-2. Francis Gary Powers, whose U-2 was downed inside the Soviet Union in 1960 on a spy photo mission, took off from Incirlik Air Base in southern Turkey.

Since the U.S. arms embargo that followed Turkey's 1974 invasion of Cyprus, Turks have been mistrustful of their total military reliance on Washington.

Mr. Ecevit is pursuing an active policy of detente with Russia and he is under pressure from the extreme left wing of his Republican Peoples party to avoid further western military commitments.

The question became a volatile domestic political issue after Mr. Ecevit described Turkey's position to a journalist. He was strongly attacked by the conservative opposition leader, Suleyman Demirel, who had earlier said he would not exploit the issue.

The Americans would like to let the matter sit for about six months, until Mr. Ecevit gets by crucial October elections and has a chance to reconsolidate his minority government in the National Assembly.

If Ankara's approval becomes necessary before then, to win U.S. Senate ratification of the SALT treaty, it is believed that Mr. Ecevit would grant it though he would prefer to wait. In either case, the agreement would be low-key, without formal announcement.

Mr. Ecevit said he advised Washington more than a year ago that the United States and Moscow should discuss any Turkish contribution to the verification of SALT, although he was apparently referring only to the intelligence-gathering ground posts in Turkey at that time. The United States still enforced a partial arms embargo on Turkey at that time.

Two of those posts will contribute to monitoring SALT enforcement. Pirinlik in eastern Turkey can monitor telemetry data from missiles. Sinop on the Black Sea listens to communications that relate to missile launches. A third facility, Belbasi near Ankara, gathers information related to the nuclear test ban treaty.

Two dozen other U.S. facilities in Turkey include relay and communications stations linked to these intelligence gathering posts, which are said to provide 30 per cent of American electronic intelligence on the Soviet Union.

Observers here were amazed by the outspoken statements of Gen. Evren on his return from an 18 day visit to the United States and Canada. They noted that he spoke at the airport after an exhausting trip, when reporters hit him with news that the U.S. House of Representatives had changed a \$50 million military grant to a loan of the same amount. The general

has refused comment on the matter since then.

The Turkish military is sensitive to the difference between a grant and loan because a grant makes Turkey eligible for cut-rate purchases of U.S. surplus defense equipment.

Turkish and U.S. officials deny that any attempt has been made to link the U-2 permission with the military aid package now before Congress. But the atmospherics of aid decisions can make it more or less difficult for a struggling Turkish government to grant that permission.

A year will be needed to outfit enough of the modern U-2's with the electronics

needed to monitor missile tests, which could mean their active role will be limited to three years or less.

By 1983, the United States is expected to have a new satellite that would be able to collect almost all the data formerly gathered by the sites in Iran.

Harold Brown, the U.S. defense secretary, concedes that U-2 flights along the Soviet border will not provide all the test information previously collected by the Iran posts. Nor will the large radio antenna in Norway, combined with a satellite, fill all the gaps, he said, though adequate information will be available to prevent Soviet cheating.